

**From:** Josh Bauguss  
**To:** Microsoft ATR  
**Date:** 1/23/02 2:57pm  
**Subject:** Microsoft Settlement

To whom it may concern,

I wish to briefly address the proposed settlement that is currently in review. I firmly believe that what has been suggested is merely a slap on the wrist for Microsoft. It will do nothing to change the face of competition in the PC software industry.

I wish to offer a little proof of this. Since they have been deemed a monopoly by our court system, they have continued their business practices. (It actually seems very apparent that they have accelerated them) In Windows XP, there is a simple feature of being able to look at zip files. Now, zip files have become a mainstay in computing and especially with transferring files over the internet. However, just like they did to Netscape with Internet Explorer, they just effectively made compression programs by a third party unnecessary. (i.e.. winzip.com, winace.com) These are two companies that I know of that do not have a bright future.

There is then the issue of Microsoft Office. It has been the standard for desktop publishing for many years now. However, these programs use file formats that are proprietary. They change this file format with every upgrade to make it nearly impossible for third party office suites to be compatible. Computing has become something that is almost second nature in today's society. There should be no reason why I should not be able to choose which operating system or which desktop office suite I wish to use. Right now there really isn't a choice. If you want to do business and send people documents or other forms of correspondence, you are left with little choice but Windows and Microsoft Office. It has also become the norm that you must have the latest version of office in order for your documents to be viewable by others. (and likewise to view documents sent to you)

I think there is a much better solution that can be worked. I don't think it would be fair necessarily to limit Microsoft's ability to do business. However, for certain things like Word documents or DirectX, these should become Open Standards. (look where having open standards in the pc hardware industry has gotten us. There is a level of competition there that causes great innovation and offers nothing but great benefits to consumers)

It should not matter what OS or what Office suite I choose to use. If I want to write a simple letter (other than an e-mail which thankfully is open) I should be able to send that letter to anybody I choose. That person should be able to open it easily. I shouldn't have to think twice about it.

Another example I want to address is that of the gaming industry. This industry is left with little choice if they wish to make a product that has

a chance to be profitable. They have been forced into writing games for Microsoft Windows and now they must use DirectX. While the DirectX standard is a good thing, such a standard should not be closed. If this were an open standard, any other OS maker could implement their own version of it. This would enable game makers to deploy their products without having to target an operating system. (and currently, if you want to make money, you MUST target Windows)

We must empower the consumer. By giving them the choice to choose which OS they use, which Office suite they use, we can recreate competition which has really been lacking in the PC industry for over a decade. No business can currently start a software product without fearing that Microsoft will only brace and extend it, make it their own, and incorporate it somehow into their OS which is the monopoly part of their business.

Microsoft can still benefit from well thought out solutions. A solution such as creating standards will make it possible for Microsoft to implement them in their own way. If consumers choose to go with Microsoft's solution, then that is good for them. However, consumers should not be forced into their choice.

Thank you for your time,  
Josh Bauguss  
Albuquerque, New Mexico

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